

division of public housing & rental assistance



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Section 8: Housing Choice Voucher Program *Fact Sheet*

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) increases affordable housing choices for very low-income households by helping families pay a portion of their rent in privately owned housing.

DHCD's Division of Public Housing and Rental Assistance, which administers this program, has the responsibility for regulatory and administrative oversight of all state and federally-aided rental assistance programs which address the needs of low-income families, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

How it works

Eligible households are issued a Section 8/HCVP Voucher. The family is then given up to 120 days to locate their own rental housing, which can be located anywhere in the country, or they can elect to remain in their current unit provided it meets program requirements. Rental units must meet minimum standards of health and safety. The rent for the unit must be reasonable in comparison to rents charged for similar, unassisted apartments in the area. A rental subsidy is paid directly to the landlord on behalf of the participating family by the housing agency. The subsidy is determined by the family's income. The family pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the Section 8 program.

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) contracts with eight regional housing agencies and one local housing authority to administer its portfolio of Section 8/HCVP subsidies.

Who is eligible

Eligibility is based on the family's total gross income. At least 75% of all vouchers issued by a
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housing agency must be targeted to households whose total income does not exceed 30% of the area median income. HUD establishes income limits.

**Application
process**

Applicants may contact any one of DHCD's eight regional administering agencies to request an application or, a hard copy of the DHCD application can be downloaded from DHCD's homepage at www.mass.gov/dhcd and then submitted to any of the regional agencies. Please be advised that because the demand for housing assistance often exceeds the limited available resources, long waiting lists exist. (Note: In Massachusetts, families can also apply to over 100 local housing authorities that also administer the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Lists are frequently closed due to the number of families waiting.)

**Grant
amounts**

DHCD manages a Section 8/HCVP Voucher Program which serves over 18,000 households.

**For further
information**

Contact the Bureau of Federal Rental Assistance at (617) 573-1150, or the local housing authority in a community of your choice.